

Bullying Prevention Initiative – “Getting Started” Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy

New bullying prevention legislation included under IC 20-33-8. Sec. 13-5, requires the *Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy* in the Indiana Department of Education to:

- Include training in identifying, preventing, and intervening in bullying in the ISSSA curriculum.
- **Assist the school corporation’s school safety specialist in providing materials and professional development on bullying prevention to the school safety committee, faculty, and staff.**
- **Provide educational outreach and training to school personnel concerning: a) the identification of; b) the prevention of; and c) intervention in bullying.**

Health and safety experts say that preventing bullying among children requires more awareness and intervention among adults. The bullying prevention plans that are the most successful began with training for the adults. All school personnel should be aware of the extent of the bully/victim problems in your schools and should involve themselves in changing the situation.

First Step: What should be the initial steps to prevent bullying in your school district? The best interventions in bullying prevention include school-level interventions that are designed to improve overall school climate and target the entire school population.

National bullying prevention experts recommend that schools:

- ◆ Establish a Bullying Prevention Committee that will research and study all aspects of the school’s bullying and violence prevention efforts. As well as what bullying is, the scope of its effects on both the victim and the bully.
- ◆ Administer questionnaires to students and teachers to determine the nature and extent of bully/victim problems in the school.
- ◆ Train the committee and **all** school staff personnel in the basics of what bullying is, how and why it happens, and what can be done to prevent it.

The *Indiana School Safety Specialist Academy* has a group of speakers and bully prevention trainers who may assist you. They are available for workshops, presentations, PBA days, etc., at no cost to Indiana’s schools.

- ◆ Develop school rules against bullying.
- ◆ Establish classroom rules against bullying, involving students in creating them.
- ◆ Increase supervision in the “hot spots” that students tend to use to bully and intimidate other students. Improve supervision during lunch, recess, and passing periods in an effort to intervene quickly in bullying situations.
- ◆ Raise school and community awareness and involvement in creating a long-term anti-bullying plan.
- ◆ Hold staff discussion groups using the materials enclosed in this mailing and/or the additional resources listed.
- ◆ Involve parents, conduct meetings with and disseminate information to parents of the school to make them aware of the school’s anti-bullying plan of action.

Second Step:

(Second semester, January 2006)

Beginning in the Fall of 2005, once committees are formed and **after** assessments have been done, a school building may decide they need to make changes to existing curriculum, school policies, and types of interventions used in incidents of bullying and violence. ***No one prevention program is appropriate for every school.*** Some programs are very expensive. We have researched the best programs and resources that are free or reasonably priced for schools to use. We have enclosed a few of those items in this mailing. Please check the Academy website on a regular basis for updates – <http://www.doe.state.in.us/issas>.

Third Step:

(Late Spring, Summer 2006)

After: Awareness about bullying has begun, the Bullying Prevention Committee has suggested changes or additions to school policies and procedures, all personnel are aware of appropriate interventions for school staff members.

If your school decides to move forward and adopt a bullying prevention program, the enclosures guide you on how to choose a program that works, and which programs are approved when using the local district's Safe & Drug Free Funds. These websites will also assist you with your research:

- **Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence** - www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints
- **Substance Abuse and Mental health Services Administration's (SAMSHA)** National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices: <http://www.modelprograms.samhsa.org>; and at: http://pathwayscourses.samhsa.gov/bully/bully_6_pg14.htm
- **U.S. Department of Education**, Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools (2002) – www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01.pdf